ANNUAL REPORT

for the fiscal year
ending March 31, 1991

Nova Scotia Information Service

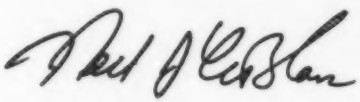
92-03916/

To His Honour
The Honourable Lloyd R. Crouse, P.C.
Lieutenant Governor of the
Province of Nova Scotia

Sir:

I have the privilege to submit the annual report of the Nova Scotia Information Service for the fiscal year ending March 31, 1991.

Yours truly,



Neil J. LeBlanc
Minister responsible for the
Communications and Information Act

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Rob Smith
Executive Director
Nova Scotia Information Service

OVERVIEW

Nova Scotia Information Service maintains the flow of communication between the government and the Nova Scotia public. Seven sections work co-operatively to achieve this goal: Public Enquiries, Media Services, Media Monitoring, Visual Communications, the Advertising Services Group, Audio Services, and the Government Bookstore.

PUBLIC ENQUIRIES

Public Enquiries, which operates a provincial toll-free telephone service, responds to general enquiries on provincial government programs and services. As well, where possible, staff assist with other general information requests, including those related to municipal and federal government matters.

During this fiscal year, the Public Enquiries section was computerized. Information from files, cards, and directories was entered into the computer, enabling staff to respond to enquiries more quickly. These computer files will be updated continually.

In 1990–91, the two-person staff handled 21,152 requests for information. That compares with 20,632 requests in 1989–90.

Public Enquiries also provided information kits on Nova Scotia to students and schools across North America. As in previous years, Public Enquiries officers updated provincial, national, and international directories, almanacs, and guides as requested.

As well, each year, Public Enquiries staff produce and distribute an Immigration Kit which provides information to people who wish to move to Nova Scotia.

MEDIA SERVICES

Media Services provides writing, editing, and distribution services for government departments and agencies.

All news releases are edited before distribution to ensure consistency in both quality and style. Feature articles and news releases are prepared upon request by a department or agency.

News releases and other government information, such as the Speech from the Throne and the Budget Address, are distributed via computerized electronic mail. All radio stations (including two new stations), daily newspapers, news services, caucus offices, and three weekly papers in Nova Scotia are equipped with printers to receive the information.

Weekly newspapers were supplied with releases, photographs, and other government information of interest to their particular circulation areas by mail at least twice each week or faxed to papers when necessary to meet deadlines. In addition, news releases were distributed to about 150 non-media subscribers weekly.

In 1990–91, 1,916 transmissions were distributed over the government wire. This included 872 general news releases as well as winter road reports, ski reports, beach reports, forest fire indexes, and notes to editors.

As well, during this period, Media Services staff compiled and edited information for *A Guide to the Nova Scotia Government*. This publication provides general information on the programs and services of provincial government departments and agencies.

MEDIA MONITORING

Media Monitoring scans provincial print and broadcast media in order to keep departments and agencies informed about public opinion and activity related to government policy, programs, and services.

Each week in 1990–91, staff read and clipped more than 100 newspapers and monitored 10 television newscasts and 20 radio broadcasts. Staff responded to 283 requests from departments for audio and video dubs of news broadcasts and provided compilation tapes to departments who requested this service.

There were 160 requests for clippings as well as requests to monitor specific issues, such as AIDS, the 911 emergency response system, and activities related to the Disabled Person's Commission.

During the first part of the fiscal year, Media Monitoring summarized electronic media reports of interest to subscribers and distributed these daily. As well, weekly newspaper reports were summarized and distributed to subscribers each week. However, near the end of the year, government information officers were consulted about changes to the media monitoring service.

After hearing suggestions from information officers, meeting with outside media monitoring agencies, and considering time and cost efficiencies, Sight and Sound Productions was contracted to monitor audio-visual media in the province.

Now, Sight and Sound prepares a summary of news reports which is faxed twice daily to subscribing departments. Departments can then request video or audio dubs through the Media Monitoring section, which continues to tape selected local news broadcasts.

As well, a sophisticated computer tracking system was implemented for print media. News releases and issues of interest to subscribing government departments are recorded in a database. If a subscriber is interested in a particular issue, the articles can be quickly accessed by Media Monitoring staff.

VISUAL COMMUNICATIONS

Film and Video

This unit produces and collaborates on information and training projects and co-ordinates video production for government departments and agencies.

Some of the projects this unit co-ordinated in 1990–91 included videos on Christmas tree shearing for Lands and Forests and on Voluntary Planning to encourage public input into economic development.

As well, the television commercial The Faces of AIDS was produced as part of a public information campaign on AIDS awareness. It was produced in 35 mm motion picture film and transferred to video under this section's direction for the Department of Health and the Nova Scotia Commission on AIDS.

Still Photography

This unit provides photos for a variety of uses, including slide shows, publicity, illustrations for government publications and identification cards. This fiscal year, staff produced 12,273 black and white photographs for media and other purposes. There were 198 colour photo and 75 security i.d. requests.

Special projects in 1990–91 included work for the Victoria General annual report, NSIT calendar, the Senior's Expo, Canada Games team photos, and aerial shots of Cape Breton for the Department of Industry, Trade and Technology.

THE ADVERTISING SERVICES GROUP

The Advertising Services Group (ASG) of Nova Scotia Information Service now acts as a full-service advertising agency on behalf of the Nova Scotia government.

The ASG consults with client departments regarding their advertising and promotional needs, prepares media proposals, provides cost analyses of campaigns, and provides media buying and placement services for government departments and agencies.

As well, the ASG creates and produces advertisements for all types of media (radio, television, print, billboards, buses, etc.). This is done in-house or co-ordinated using outside agencies or freelancers.

Cost recoveries for the section were based on a 15 per cent administrative fee charged for in-province media placements only. In the past, print placement for Nova Scotia daily newspapers and all out-of-province print placement was handled by McGuire Communications. However, at the end of this fiscal year, this arrangement was terminated and the responsibility for all placements was given to the ASG. The ASG did not add agency commissions to consulting or to the co-ordination of creative services. The resulting savings were passed on to all client departments.

During the past year, the ASG renegotiated certain contracts with newspapers in the province, resulting in considerably lower line rates and a greater degree of flexibility in placement possibilities. The resulting savings and benefits have been made available to all clients advertising on behalf of the Government of Nova Scotia.

In 1990–91, the ASG began restructuring placement and billing systems in an effort to provide more complete and current information to client departments. As well, the ASG, through Nova Scotia Information Service, assists in administering the government's advertising policy.

AUDIO SERVICES

News conferences are set up, recorded and dubs prepared and selected for distribution to radio stations by this section.

This year, Audio Services distributed 21 billboards containing 53 voice actualities to electronic media. This section also produced sound tracks for slide shows and provided sound feeds for bill briefings and news conferences.

Voice reports from SeaSell '90, the Export Trade Mission to Europe and the Canada Winter Games in P.E.I. were recorded and distributed to radio stations throughout the province. As well, the Department of Agriculture and Marketing's weekly farm market report is fed to four radio stations through Audio Services.

GOVERNMENT BOOKSTORE

Retail and mail order operations continued from the Government Bookstore at One Government Place, 1700 Granville St., Halifax and from Pages — The Downtown Bookstore in Sydney.

Several new titles from the Nova Scotia Museum, Department of Lands and Forests, and Public Archives of Nova Scotia were added to the shelves.

In a continuing effort to upgrade systems and procedures and service to the customer, the bookstore inventory was computerized during this fiscal year.

The bookstore processed 3,224 orders in 1990–91, with sales totalling $156,398.62.